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PATHWAYS to Promise
Connecting Communities of Care

Mental Health Ministries
To erase the stigma of mental illness
A Program of Pathways To Promise

SPOTLIGHT

Summer 2024

Pathways to Promise & Mental Health Ministries

Mental Health Ministries, a program of Pathways to Promise, provides resources to erase the stigma of mental illness in our faith communities and create caring congregations for persons living with mental health challenges and their families.

Website Resources

Check out Pathways to Promise to discover more Mental Health Ministries resources under these menu items:

- Homepage – scroll down to click on "Learn more" in the Mental Health Ministries box
- Resources button – click on Mental Health Ministries Resources in the dropdown box
- Mental Health Ministries button

Please visit these pages for resources. We are working to improve the listing of resources. You may contact us at admin@pathways2promise.org to suggest or share additional mental health resources.

Interested in a shorter monthly Spotlight instead of the current quarterly Spotlight?

This shorter monthly Spotlight would consist of resources that will focus on preparing you month-by-month for upcoming events and holidays happening online and around the world, pertaining to mental health and wellness.

Yes
No
Maybe

Exchanging Social Media for Mental Health Social Helping

Social Media seriously harms your mental health

Photo by Christopher Ott on Unsplash

By George R. Williams, PhD
Executive Director

As social media proliferates worldwide—with Facebook alone boasting 2.96 billion users—concerns about its impact on individual and collective well-being have grown significantly. Despite the widespread use of these platforms, social media companies are not always forthcoming about the potential negative effects on mental health. An investigation by the Wall Street Journal revealed that Facebook was aware of the mental health risks linked to its Instagram app but kept these findings secret.1

Mental Health Risks

Research has consistently shown that social media use is linked to increased rates of depression, anxiety, loneliness, and reduced self-esteem.2 A study published in the Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology found that limiting social media use to 30 minutes per day led to significant reductions in depression and loneliness over three weeks.3 The comparison culture and unrealistic expectations perpetuated by social media are particularly damaging, especially to adolescents during critical periods of identity development.

Physical Health Concerns

In addition to mental health impacts, excessive use of social media can lead to physical health problems. Prolonged screen time is associated with poor sleep quality and sedentary lifestyles, contributing to a range of health issues such as obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and musculoskeletal problems.3 The constant influx of information and notifications can also lead to digital fatigue and reduced attention spans, impacting productivity and cognitive functions.

Academic and Job Performance

Social media can negatively affect academic and job performance by consuming time that could be spent on productive activities. A study in the Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology indicated that students who frequently use social media tend to have lower academic performance due to the distraction it creates.4 Similarly, in the workplace, employees who spend substantial time on social media exhibit reduced efficiency and job satisfaction.

Privacy and Security Risks

Privacy and security concerns are significant when it comes to social media use. Users often share personal information that can be exploited for malicious purposes, including identity theft and cyberbullying. Furthermore, the misuse of personal data by social media companies themselves, as highlighted in numerous scandals, raises serious privacy issues.4

The Issue of Loneliness

One of the most pressing issues in the U.S. today is loneliness. Despite being more connected digitally, many people feel increasingly isolated. Social media can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and inadequacy by presenting an illusion of connection while lacking genuine social interaction. A study showed people who use social media for the motive of maintaining their relationships feel lonelier.5 Studies have shown that face-to-face interactions are crucial for mental health and can significantly reduce feelings of loneliness.6

The Role of Companionship Care

Our Companionship Care program teaches how to support individuals in distress through compassionate presence and active listening. While primarily marketed to adults, this program can be equally beneficial for youth. Training young people in companionship care can equip them with the skills to support their peers, fostering a more connected and supportive community.

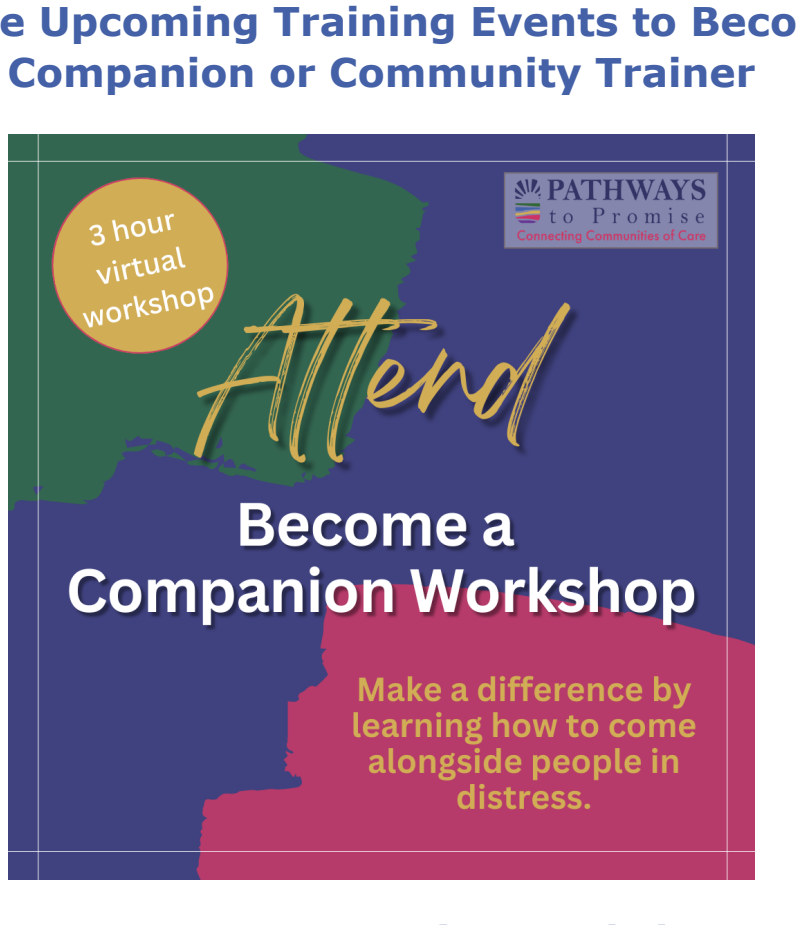
A Call to Action

Let's work to convert some of our social media time into social helping time. By reducing our time spent on social media and increasing face-to-face interactions, we can improve our mental health and well-being. This shift can start with small steps, such as setting limits on daily social media use and dedicating time to engage in meaningful conversations with family and friends.

References

1. Ahigren, M. (2024). 55+Facebook Statisitcs & Trends. Retrieved from https://www.websiterating.com/blog/research/facebook-statistics/
2. Zubair U, Khan MK, Albashari M. Link between excessive social media use and psychiatric disorders. Ann Med Surg (Lond). 2023 Mar 27;85(4):875-878.
3. Hunt, M.G., Young, J. (2018). No More FOMO: Limiting Social Media Decreases Loneliness and Depression. Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology 37(10):751-768.
4. Erfani, E., Boroon, L. & Abedin B. (2021). The Dark Side of Using Online Social Networks: A review of Individuals' Negative Experiences, Journal of Global Information Management. 29(6).
5. Bonsaksen T, Ruffolo M, Price D, Leung J, Thygesen H, Lamph G, Kabelenga I, Geirdal AØ. Associations between social media use and loneliness in a cross-national population: do motives for social media use matter? Health Psychol Behav Med. 2023 Jan 1;11(1):2158089.
6. Laermans J, Scheers H, Vandekerckhove P, De Buck E. (2023). Friendly visiting by a volunteer for reducing loneliness or social isolation in older adults: A systematic review. Campbell Syst Rev. 19(4):e1359.
7. O'Keeffe, G.S. & Clarke-Pearson, K. (2011). The Impact of Social Media on Children, Adolescents, and Families. Council on Communications and Media Pediatrics. 127 (4): 800–804.

Explore Upcoming Training Events to Become a Companion or Community Trainer


3 hour virtual workshop
PATHWAYS to Promise
Connecting Communities of Care
Attend
Become a Companion Workshop
Make a difference by learning how to come alongside people in distress.

Become a Companion Workshop

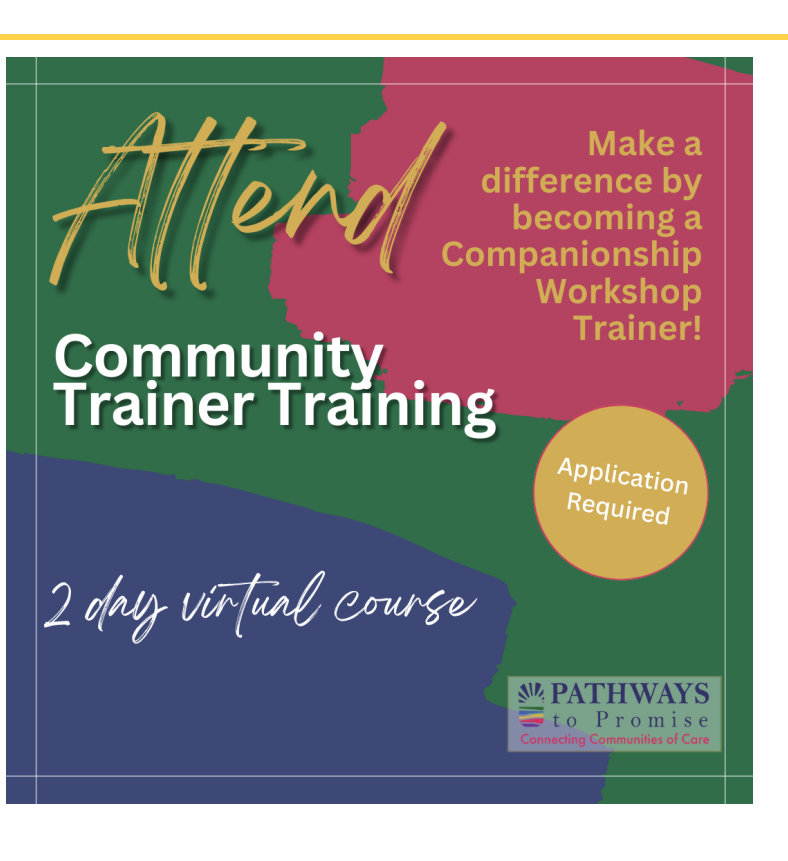
The *Become a Companion* Workshop equips ordinary individuals to reach out to those in distress, offering vital public social support as they navigate their path to healing. It harnesses our innate capacity for empathy to recognize each person's individuality and treat them with utmost respect. In Companionship, we simply offer our presence through genuine human connection, listening attentively, showing hospitality, and standing by them as neighbors on their journey towards recovery and wellness.

Learn about the revolutionary Companionship Model which has five important tenets: hospitality, neighboring, side-by-side, listening, and accompaniment. You will gain an understanding of how to move from a transactional exchange model to a relational engagement model that enables substantial change when helping others.

Upcoming Workshop

Tuesday, September 17, 2024, 5-8 pm CT
(Group discounts available)

Register for Become a Companion


Attend
Make a difference by becoming a Companionship Workshop Trainer!
Community Trainer Training
Application Required
2 day virtual course
PATHWAYS to Promise
Connecting Communities of Care

Community Trainer Training

Do you want to lead Companionship Workshops? Apply to be trained as a Community Trainer! This virtual, two-day course includes:

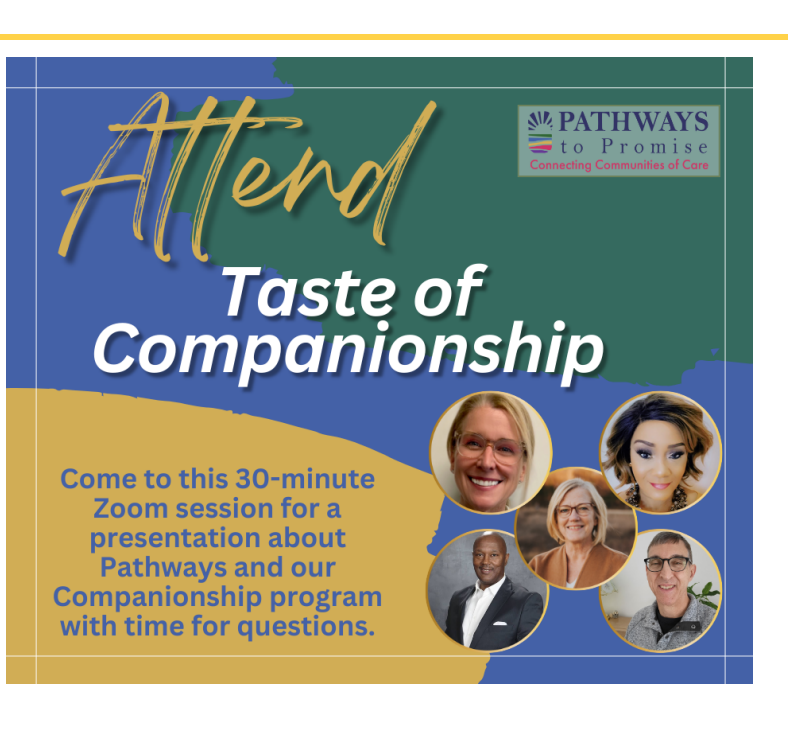
- *Become a Companion*, a three-hour workshop that teaches participants the principles and practices of Companionship that equips them to come alongside a person in distress.
- *Community Trainer Training*, an eight hour training that teaches people to lead the Become a Companionship workshops themselves.

Upcoming Training

Tues., September 17, 2024, 5-8 pm CT
PLUS Sat., September 21, 2024, 9 am-5:30 pm CT
Application deadline: Thursday, September 12th

You are encouraged to complete the application no later than September 10th.

For more information and to register/apply, click here


Attend
PATHWAYS to Promise
Connecting Communities of Care
Taste of Companionship
Come to this 30-minute Zoom session for a presentation about Pathways and our Companionship program with time for questions.

Attend *Taste of Companionship*

Taste of Companionship introduces Companionship and provides time for questions and answers, all in about half an hour. Our executive director, Dr. George, participates as available.

- **Wednesday, August 28, 9 AM CT, led by Rita Rippentrop, National Trainer**

Click on a link below to register for a Zoom session
(Contact admin@pathways2promise.org for Zoom support.)

Register Here on the Pathways to Promise Homepage

All of the following articles from websites other than pathways2promise.org are intended as a library of resources only. Pathways to Promise receives no financial benefit from these organizations.

JULY

These resources are helpful for any time, although intended to highlight themes from the Mental Health calendar for July.

July is BIPOC Health Month

Mental Health Resources for Black, Indigenous And People of Color

"The way we talk about things can often influence the way we think about them. In the field of mental health, we are familiar with "person first" language. This is language that prioritizes the identity of individuals as human beings with unique experiences and identities over their mental health status. For example, we avoid describing people as "schizophrenics" and instead refer to them as "people with schizophrenia.'"

Click here to read more

July is Disability Pride Month

Disability Pride Month celebrates disabled persons embracing their disabilities as integral parts of who they are, reclaiming visibility in public and interacting fully with their disabilities out in the open, and rejecting shame and internalized ableism. It is a time for the disability community to come together, uplift, and amplify one another's voices and be heard. Disability pride has been described as "accepting and honoring each person's uniqueness and seeing it as a natural and beautiful part of human diversity."

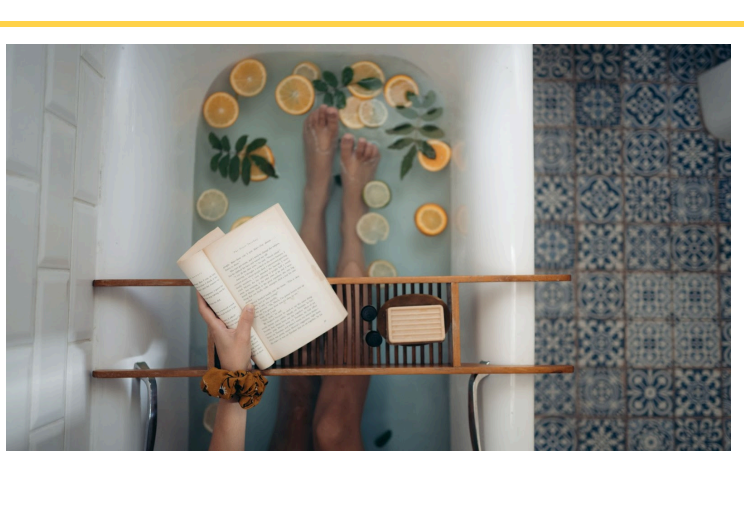
Click here to learn more

July is Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

"Mental health affects us all, and everyone deserves the inherent right to have access to mental health support, resources, and care. Still, not everyone has equal and equitable access to these crucial services because of stigma, shame, or fear of judgment. These factors create significant barriers that prevent individuals from seeking mental health care."

Click here to learn more

International Self-Care Day - July 24



How to Celebrate International Self-Care Day on July 24th

"When many people think of self-care, the act of doing a face mask or drawing yourself a nice hot bubble bath is probably what comes to mind first. The truth is, that an ideal self-care routine includes a variety of actions and mindsets to really work and benefit you. Self-care includes a wide spectrum of related categories—it includes your physical, social, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

If you're taking care of your outer appearance all the while you're ignoring your bad habits and poor mental health, or setting boundaries but not sleeping, you aren't really practicing self-care. We can do all of the face masks and plan every Netflix movie night we want, but at the end of the day, if we're neglecting our emotions, nothing will change.

Now, we aren't saying self-care *can't* be a nice cup of freshly brewed green tea or an hour spent walking alone in the park—-but it's important to remember to take care of the less glamorous tasks and details required to maintain a healthy lifestyle and stable mental state."

Click here to read more

National Schizophrenia Awareness Day - July 25

""National Schizophrenia Awareness Day on 25 July shines a light on the everyday challenges the millions of people living with a diagnosis of schizophrenia face and how we can tackle the stigma and discrimination around it."

Click here to read more

National Disability Independence Day - July 26

U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

"In the United States, July 26 is recognized annually as National Disability Independence Day, commemorating the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law in 1990.

The landmark legislation has served as a de facto bill of rights for Americans with disabilities by assuring their access to economic and civic opportunities. Its passage represented an unprecedented bipartisan effort to acknowledge the centuries of discrimination suffered by the disability community, and a fundamental change to how they live their lives."

Click here to read more

AUGUST

These resources are helpful for any time, although intended to highlight themes from the Mental Health calendar for August.

International Day of the World's Indigenous People August 9

"There are an estimated 476 million indigenous peoples in the world living across 90 countries. They make up less than 5 per cent of the world's population, but account for 15 per cent of the poorest. They speak an overwhelming majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages and represent 5,000 different cultures.

Indigenous peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. Indigenous peoples' conceptualization of health and well-being is generally broader and more holistic, with health frequently viewed as both an individual and a collective right, strongly determined by community, land and the natural environment. Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes the right of indigenous peoples to their traditional medicines, to maintain their health practices and to access social and health services without discrimination.

In order to raise awareness of the needs of these population groups, including their health needs, every 9 August commemorates the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, chosen in recognition of the first meeting of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations held in Geneva in 1982."

Click here to learn more

Women's Equality Day - August 26

Women's
EQUALITY
Day

"This amendment was passed in 1920 and it banned states and the federal government from withholding the right to vote based on sex. This was a historic amendment and a massive victory for the cause of women across the nation. The right to vote is fundamental to the democratic process and it meant that political candidates had to take women's issues seriously when running for office. Women became political representatives with the ability to influence the outcome of elections and as a result, the course of the nation.

Women's Equality Day is celebrated every year on August 26th to commemorate the 1920 adoption of the nineteenth amendment to the United States Constitution, which prohibits states and the federal government from denying the right to vote to citizens of the United States based on sex."

Click here to learn more

National Grief Awareness Day - August 30

Photo by Naomi August on Unsplash

Real History of National Grief Awareness Day

"Grief is one of the oldest and most enduring aspects of the human experience. If you haven't yet experienced grief, it's unfortunately likely to happen. The term 'grief' encompasses all of the emotions around a loss, and 'mourning' is defined as the external expression of the pain. 'Bereavement' is another commonly-used term for grief. Throughout human history, there have been many attempts to describe and heal grief, and they have changed significantly over the years."

Click here to read more

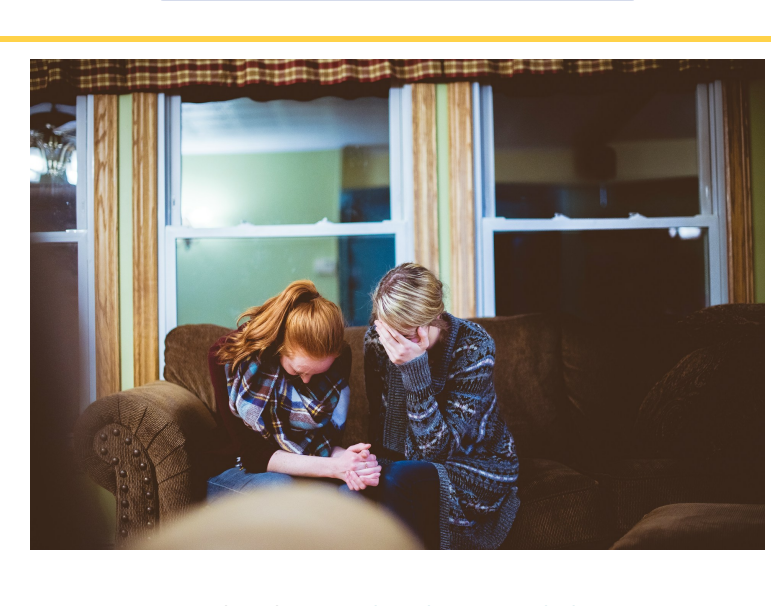


Photo by K. Mitch Hodge on Unsplash

National Grief Awareness Day

"All of us have experienced grief in one way or another throughout our lives. As part of the human experience, grief encompasses the emotions that appear in response to loss. Sorrow and suffering, although painful, are a natural reaction to loss. Whether grieving the death of a loved one, or grieving a relationship, job loss, or other life event, the process of grief is something that comes in waves and is not linear. Every individual has a unique journey through grief, which often includes stages such as denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance."

Click here to learn more

International Overdose Awareness Day - August 31

"International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) – held on August 31 every year – is the world's largest annual campaign to end overdose, remember without stigma those who have died and acknowledge the grief of family and friends left behind.

Our theme for 2024 is "Together we can", highlighting the power of our community when we all stand together."

Click here to learn more

SEPTEMBER

These resources are helpful for any time, although intended to highlight themes from the Mental Health calendar for September.

National Suicide Prevention Month

988
SUICIDE
& CRISIS

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988, or text MHA to 741741.

No Suicide Attempt Should Be Dismissed Or Treated Lightly! Why Do People Attempt Suicide?

A suicide attempt is a clear indication that someone is struggling and needs immediate help. The majority of suicides worldwide are related to mental health disorders; depression, substance use, and psychosis are the biggest risk factors.

Click here to learn more

National Recovery Month

Photo by Brooke Cagle on Unsplash

"**If you live with mental illness, you may be struggling to find treatment, manage your medication and cope with life's challenges effectively.**

There is ample cause for hope. You are not alone, help is available, mental health conditions are treatable, and you can take practical steps to recover your life. Here you'll find interactive tools and resources to help you better understand your treatment options, work closely with your health care provider, learn about the supports available to you, and start on your recovery journey."

Click here to learn more

National Suicide Prevention Week - September 8-14

DON'T GIVE UP
YOU ARE NOT ALONE
YOU MATTER

Suicide Prevention Data from MHAscreening.org

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in the United States. Click below to see more information.

Click here to learn more

World Suicide Prevention Day - September 10

CHANGE THE NARRATIVE
World Suicide Prevention Day
10 September

World Suicide Prevention Day 2024

"Suicide remains a critical global issue, affecting individuals and communities worldwide. In an effort to address this issue and encourage positive change, the theme for World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) 2024-2026 has been announced as "Changing the Narrative on Suicide".

The aim of the theme is to raise awareness about the importance of changing the narrative surrounding suicide and transforming how we perceive this complex issue. Changing the narrative requires systemic change. It's about shifting from a culture of silence and stigma to one of openness, understanding, and support.

Keep an eye on this page in the coming weeks as we add further information, valuable resources, campaign assets and events."

Click here to learn more

Yom Kippur - September 24-25

World Physical and Mental Health During the High Holy Days

"Before I learned to read Hebrew, the High Holy Days could wreck me. The language of "sin" and "repentance" that I learned as a child sent me into a tailspin of despair. *Avinu Malkeinu* [Our Father, Our King] was a fearsome image before which I cowered, a failure. A whole day of that, plus fasting, sent me into a black pool of depression. Even the relatively lighter "hit" of Rosh Hashanah was hard."

Click here to learn more

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

July

All Month Long Themes - BIPOC Health Month Disability Pride Month

National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

1 - International Joke Day

2 - Sarcoma Awareness Month

*6 – Islamic: Ashura – Hijri New Year: Islamic New Year

*9 – Baha'i: Martyrdom of the Bab

10 – Martyrdom of the Bab

*23 – Rastafarian: Birthday of Haile Selassie

24 – Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Pioneer Day

24 -International Self-Care Day

25 - National Schizophrenia Awareness Day

25 - World Drowning Prevention Day -

26 - National Disability Independence Day

27 – Tisha B'Av

28 - World Hepatitis Day

30 - National Grief Awareness Day

August

*1 – Lughnasadh

9 – International Day of the World's Indigenous People:*

13 – Tisha B'Av

15 – Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

16-17 – Hindu: Krishna Janmashtami

18 – Lord Krishna's Birthday

21 – Jain: Paryushana begins

*25 – Arbaeen

26 – Krishna Janmashtami

26 – Women's Equality Day

27 – Hindu: Ganesh Chaturthi

30 - National Grief Awareness Day

31 - International Overdose Awareness Day

31 – Ganesh Chaturthi: Hindu festival celebrates Lord Ganesha's birth

September

All Month Long Themes -

National Suicide Prevention Month

National Recovery Month Hispanic Heritage Month (9/15-10/15) - Latinx/Hispanic Communities and Mental Health

Week long themes

8-14 National Suicide Prevention Week

*5 – Mawlid al-Nabi

8-14 - Assisted Living Week

10 - World Suicide Prevention Day

11 – Coptic Orthodox Christian: Nayrouz

15-17 – Rosh Hashanah: Jewish New Year

15-Oct 15 – National Hispanic Heritage Month

20 – HeForShe

21- 29 – Mabon

*22 – Pagan and Wiccan: Mabon

*23-24 – Jewish: Rosh Hashanah

24- 25 – Yom Kippur

25 - National Psychotherapy Day

27 – Mawlid

28-October 2 – Hindu: Durga Puja

29-Oct 6 – Sukkot

29-Oct 14 – Pitru Paksha

Reminder: All holidays marked with * begin the prior evening.

Also consider the following calendars for other important dates:

2024 Interfaith Calendar

2024 Diversity Calendar

Mental Health Ministries, a program of Pathways to Promise, creates and promotes resources to help erase the stigma of mental health challenges in our faith communities. Join us in making a difference for those with mental health challenges and those who love and support them.

Click the button below to give a monthly gift of $30 (just $1 a day) or a one-time amount of $120 (which equals just $10 a month) or any amount you choose. You may also send a check to Pathways to Promise at the address below.

Thank you for joining us in supporting mental health needs!

Click here to give now

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